AFB BULLETIN

1955-1956, No. 1-5

HV 1571.A b1

M.C. MIGEL LIBRARY
AMERICAN PRINTING
HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

HV1571
.A b1
1956

A. F. B.

BULLETIN

No. 1 May 1955

3297-MIGEL

AFB BULLETIN REAPPEARS

With this number the American Foundation for the Blind resumes its issuance of the AFB Bulletin. As before, the purpose of the Bulletin is to bring to as large a group as possible information which is important to this group. It is expected that most of this information will be concerned with legislation, both federal and state, of special concern to blind people. Occasionally, the emphasis will be on other matters, perhaps on an outline of services available to blind people from public or private agencies and the proper means of obtaining such services, perhaps on information on some phase of the work of the Foundation itself.

There will be no fixed publication schedule. The Bulletin will be issued whenever developments in Washington or any other event of immediate news value suggest such an immediate release of this information to those specially interested.

At present the Bulletin will appear in mimeographed form. The Foundation will investigate means of producing also a braille edition for those who prefer this form of reading, but nothing definite regarding this has as yet been decided. However, it can be said that the Matilda Ziegler Magazine for the Blind will carry most of the material which will appear in the Bulletin, although the entire content of any one Bulletin probably will not be reprinted in any one issue of the Ziegler.

The mailing list of the Bulletin features private and public agencies and schools for the blind. In addition, a considerable number of blind individuals have expressed a desire to have their names included in the list. We should like to see this number of interested persons even larger, and therefore extend an invitation to others to send their names to the Foundation for the Bulletin mailing list. We feel that the more the blind people themselves know of the services available to them, the more these services are likely to improve and grow.

American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
15 West 16th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

REPORT ON
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

by
M. Robert Barnett

A few months ago, after several years of this administration of the Foundation, it became evident to me that it really was not clear in my mind just what the total field of work for the blind would seem to place as most important in the areas of improvement in services for the blind which stem from federal legislation. Often faced with the question - "How does the Foundation stand on this or that?" - I found that there either was no understanding of the particular subject or that there was a great deal of disagreement among staff members, or among trustees, or between our group and the official voices of a number of national associations. I was convinced, and still am, that many of our disagreements have their roots in our failure to understand each other's language. Very few of the controversies about federal legislation which occur among our own groups would remain to a significant degree if we could only realize that we are all in agreement about principles and objectives, and disagree only with regard to format of solutions or strategy of accomplishment.

Accordingly, we decided to set forth in straightforward fashion a written outline of those services or benefits for the blind which, in our opinion, most appropriately should be provided or improved through acts of Congress. Our first attempt was reviewed by our trustees, many of whom are well-known in their activities with other groups in work for the blind. Next, we invited representatives of five national associations to discuss the outline with us. The discussion occurred on March 15 and included representation from the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, the Blinded Veterans Association, the National Council of Executives of State Agencies

REPORT ON
FEDERAL LEGISLATION

by
Mr. Robert Barnett

A few months ago, after several years of this administration of the Foundation, it became evident to me that it really was not clear in my mind just what the total field of work for the blind would seem to place as most important in the areas of improvement in services for the blind which stem from federal legislation. Often faced with the question - "How does the Foundation stand on this or that?" - I found that there either was no understanding of the particular subject or that there was a great deal of disagreement among staff members, or among trustees, or between our group and the official voices of a number of national associations. I was convinced, and still am, that many of our disagreements have their roots in our failure to understand each other's language. Very few of the controversies about federal legislation which occur among our own group would remain to a significant degree if we could only realize that we are all in agreement about principles and objectives, and disagree only with regard to forms of solutions or strategy of accomplishment.

Accordingly, we decided to set forth in straightforward fashion a written outline of those services or benefits for the blind which, in our opinion, most appropriately should be provided or improved through acts of Congress. Our first attempt was reviewed by our trustees, many of whom are well-known in their activities with other groups in work for the blind. Next, we invited representatives of five national associations to discuss the outline with us. The discussion occurred on March 13 and included representation from the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, the Blinded Veterans Association, the National Council of Executives of State Agencies

for the Blind, and the National Federation of the Blind. Opinions were solicited from those present on various points at issue. The participants, however, were not asked to join in support of any program formulated as a result of the meeting.

With the benefit of such advisory influences, however, the Foundation has tried to crystallize its current attitudes toward federal services and benefits. We present here the several points considered, each with the following commentary - first, the Foundation's opinion; second, controversial factors where they are known to exist; and third, what, if anything, is either planned or active in and about our nation's Capitol.

1. FEDERAL INSURANCE AGAINST BLINDNESS

The American Foundation for the Blind recommends to all congressmen and to students of social insurance the consideration of a plan of federal insurance against blindness. While the Foundation believes all disabled people eventually should be covered, it is clear that the principal concern is for those who are blinded. Such insurance could be provided through relatively simple amendments to existing social security legislation whereby provision could be made for payment to a worker who becomes blind of a monthly income which would be equal to that which he normally would receive from social security at the age of seventy-two years. Income received from an operating federal insurance plan against disability, should, in almost all instances, make it unnecessary for the individual to be considered for grants under public assistance programs, and, in time, the number of such persons eligible for or in need of money grants through public assistance would be reduced significantly.

As a minimum plan, there is no controversy among us with regard to the foregoing objective. There are those, however, who would wish to see an extension of

from the Blind, and the National Federation of the Blind. Opinions were solicited from those present on various points at issue. The participants, however, were not asked to join in support of any program formulated as a result of the meeting.

With the benefit of such advisory influences, however, the Foundation has tried to crystallize its current attitudes toward federal services and benefits. In preparing here the several points considered, each with the following commentary - thus, the Foundation's opinions account, controversial factors where they are known to exist; and thus, what, if anything, is either planned or active in and about our nation's capital.

1. FEDERAL INSURANCE AGAINST BLINDNESS

The American Foundation, for the Blind recommends to all congressmen and to students of social insurance the consideration of a plan of federal insurance against blindness. While the Foundation believes all disabled people eventually should be covered, it is clear that the principal concern is for those who are blinded. Such insurance could be provided through relatively simple amendments to existing social security legislation whereby provision could be made for payment to a worker who becomes blind of a monthly income which would be equal to that which he currently would receive from social security at the age of seventy-two years. Income received from an operating federal insurance plan against disability, should, in almost all instances, make it unnecessary for the individual to be considered for grants under public assistance programs, and, in time, the number of such persons eligible for or in need of money grants through public assistance would be reduced significantly.

As a minimum plan, there is no controversy among us with regard to the foregoing objectives. There are those, however, who would wish to see an extension of

the principle to include not only the worker who loses his sight, but also the blind employed person who loses his job as a result of industrial policy shifts with which he as a blind person cannot cope. In our opinion, the blind person who has established himself as a worker essentially is not very greatly different from all working people who lose their jobs because of lay-offs, etc., for whom there is in existence provision for unemployment compensation payments. Admittedly, such compensation is probably inadequate, but at this stage of development the blind person at least has an equality of privilege with sighted workers. It should be noted that the reason for the seventy-two year reference in the first paragraph is designed to meet the objective of protection of the blind person's insurance payments against reduction in the event he should return to work. This, too, can become controversial from an administrative point of view. Beyond these points, it is obvious that the whole subject borders upon the very controversial issue of whether all blind persons, regardless of working status, should receive an allowance of money from government sources without a means test.

The American Association of Workers for the Blind gave impetus to the drafting of legislation to this end. Congressman Victor L. Anfuso of New York prepared such a bill with the assistance of the Foundation's Washington representative, which was introduced on May 19, (H.R. 6368).

2. A PRESERVATION OF THE $50.00 EXEMPTION OF EARNINGS IN COMPUTING THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BUDGETS OF BLIND PERSONS AND THE INITIATION OF A SLIDING SCALE TO PERMIT EXEMPTIONS OF AT LEAST A PART OF A BLIND PERSON'S EARNINGS ABOVE THE $50.00 LEVEL.

The American Foundation for the Blind is one of the several forces which has subscribed to the principle that the blind recipient of public assistance be given incentive to accept employment, even though that employment in itself may provide only part of his total financial need. This incentive was implemented through

the privilege to insure not only the worker who loses his sight, but also the blind employed person who loses his job as a result of industrial policy entirely with which he as a blind person cannot cope. In our opinion, the blind person who has established himself as a worker essentially is not very greatly different from all working people who lose their job because of layoffs, etc., for whom there is in existence provision for unemployment compensation payments. Additionally, such compensation is probably inadequate, but at this stage of development the blind person at least has an equality of privileges with sighted workers. It should be noted that the reason for the seventy-two year reference in the first paragraph is designed to meet the objective of protection of the blind person's insurance payments against reduction in the event he should return to work. This, too, can become controversial from an administrative point of view. Beyond these points, it is obvious that the whole subject hinges upon the very controversial issue of whether all blind persons, regardless of working status, should receive an allowance of money from government sources without a means test.

The American Association of Workers for the Blind gave impetus to the drafting of legislation to this end. Congressman Victor L. Anfuso of New York proposed such a bill with the assistance of the Association's Washington representative, which was introduced on May 10, (H.R. 6368).

2. A PROHIBITION OF THE $40.00 EXEMPTION OF EARNINGS IN CONSIDERING THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BUDGETS OF BLIND PERSONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MINIMUM SCALE TO REPLACE THE PRESENT ONE OF DIVERSE LEVELS OF A BLIND PERSON'S EARNINGS ABOVE THE $40.00 LEVEL.

The American Foundation for the Blind is one of the several forces which has subscribed to the principle that the blind recipients of public assistance be given incentive to accept employment, even though that employment in itself may provide only part of his total financial need. This incentive was implemented through

amendments to the Social Security Act which now provides that the state agency administering public assistance must exempt up to $50.00 per month of a blind person's earnings in computing his public assistance budget. The Foundation feels that the impact of this law has not yet really been felt, and also that there are only scattered evidences of its effect upon individual recipients of aid. These inconclusive reports are somewhat contradictory in their nature. Some schools of thought argue that the law simply places a dollar target for the blind person's incentive, and that he no longer aspires to full employment once he reaches the income level beyond which he cannot go without losing the security, as he thinks of it, of his public assistance income.

Other schools of thought point to evidence that individuals have been encouraged through this provision to accept employment and that this fact alone justifies the exemption as the individuals thus experience the personal and social values inherent in holding a day-to-day job in the community. The Foundation , in view of this current stage of inconclusive research, believes that the provision for exemption of earnings should be preserved. In addition, the Foundation advocates as a constructive measure, a sliding scale to permit exemption of at least part of a blind person's earnings above the $50.00 level.

So far as can be ascertained at this time, the foregoing principle of exemption of earnings is not controversial among us in this field. All national organizations agree that it is a desirable thing. It is possible, of course, that some administrators of welfare programs will argue, as they have in the past, that it is unfair, giving too great a privilege position to recipients of aid in the category of blindness. We know of no formal opposition to this plan as yet, however.

As of this writing, at the instance of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind, a bill which would require not only the exemption of the first $50.00 in earnings but also one-half of earnings above that amount in calculating public assistance budgets has been introduced by Congressman Thomas Jenkins of Ohio (H.R. 5658). We do not yet know whether or when it will be scheduled for hearing.

3. A STRENGTHENING OF THE RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD ACT AND ITS AMENDMENTS TO GUARANTEE WITHOUT QUESTION THE PRIORITY OF BLIND PERSONS TO SECURE ON FEDERAL PROPERTIES THE CONCESSION FOR OPERATION OF BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (COMMONLY CALLED CANTEENS, VENDING STANDS, AND INCLUDING VENDING MACHINES.)

The Foundation has publicly stated that the recent amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act, Public Law 732, may help considerably in bringing about a working system of priority for blind persons in the operation of commercial establishments on Federal properties. It is felt, however, that the intent of both the original and the amended law to give blind persons priority will still be somewhat weak because of an unnecessarily complex procedure for application to and permission from authorities in charge of respective properties.

It is realized that this national program, long considered to be one of the finest employment opportunities for blind persons yet provided under our American system, could be oversimplified in its administration and, as a result, lead to a new set of evils. However, if the several federal departments find that the intricacies of multiple authority bear out the fear that blind persons in general still will not secure this type of employment readily and constructively, then the Foundation would advocate either a new amendment to the present law or an entirely new statute.

Such an amendment or such a law would clearly state that no administrator of any federal department which owns or has control over federal property has the

legal right to license any individual or agency to operate a concession on that property unless the public agency for the blind in the state in which the building is located has certified that the location is either not needed for employment of blind people or that the type of business required in the structure is not suitable for employment of blind people.

As to the principle of priority for the blind, there is no controversy among us. There are, as most of us know, some differences among our national groups with regard to some of the policies and procedures which should be maintained in the administration of the law. Such differences generally are concerned with the question of ownership, control and supervision of the vending stands.

So far as we know, there is no current movement to attempt a correction of the problem through congressional action this year. We would predict that there may be some such action sought next year.

4. AN IMPROVED PLAN FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF READING MATERIALS FOR BLIND PERSONS TO COMPLETE THE FEDERAL SERVICE PLAN OF PRODUCING SUCH MATERIALS.

It was long ago recognized that the individual states and/or private agencies would find the problem of providing braille and Talking Book literature to blind citizens of each state a rather costly and possibly inefficient plan. As a result, our federal government has endeavored to meet on a national basis the special reading needs of the blind. The numbers of blind persons who currently are benefiting from the braille and Talking Book service program of the United States Library of Congress, especially Talking Books, has grown to approximately 50,000 and continues to show evidence of increase.

Under the language of the law, however, the authority of the administering department extends only to the purchase of such materials and not to their distribution to the individual recipients. As a result, braille and Talking Book

literature reaches blind persons through the services of twenty-eight local libraries, that are valiantly striving to cover the entire United States and insular possessions. It is safe to say that very few of these libraries are adequately financed.

This present situation is not new; it has been growing for several years. It is also evident that the burden of storage and distribution will become even more pressing in the future. The Foundation is convinced that this is a grave problem and unless some decisive steps are taken on a national basis soon, the entire program for providing reading matter for blind persons may become so riddled with inefficiency and low quality service that even service to small numbers of the total potential of readers will be badly interrupted.

The question of a solution can become controversial. It can involve differences of opinion with regard to extension of more federal aid, extension of state aid, or extension of private fund raising. It also has been agreed among us that there is not enough documented information on which to proceed. In our preliminary discussion, therefore, we reached the conclusion that a national study of library services to the blind should be undertaken, the objective findings of which hopefully would suggest the directions in which improvement and expansion should be pursued.

Accordingly, the Foundation has announced that it will project such a national study immediately. The United States Library of Congress, consulted with regard to its attitude, is encouraging the Foundation to proceed. It is our hope that the study will be completed by the early spring of 1956. There currently is no activity on this subject in so far as Congress is concerned except for the annual review of the appropriation for the existing program.

5. AN AMENDMENT TO THE ACT TO PROMOTE THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND (H.R. 4228-45th CONGRESS) TO INSURE THAT INDIVIDUAL BLIND CHILDREN, WHEREVER THEY ARE EDUCATED, WILL RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF THE ANNUAL FEDERAL QUOTA OF EDUCATIONAL BOOKS AND AIDS.

The Foundation has publicly stated that it believes that a blind child may secure proper schooling through enrolling in a residential school, in a public or private day-school class, or as an individual in his regular school. The largest percentage are presently being educated in residential schools, the great majority of which are state-supported. There is a significant number of blind children who are receiving their education in regular public school braille classes in their own localities. A small number of blind children are currently receiving education through individual placement as single blind children in classes for sighted children. The Foundation feels that the existing federal legislation to promote the education of the blind, enacted in 1879 and as later amended, is creating a condition of inequality in the distribution of federal aid to the states for procurement of school supplies, notably braille books. The Foundation believes, therefore, that the Act should be so amended that administrators of the funds provided thereby may have their hands freed to grant to the states their appropriate quota of federal aid for braille teaching supplies, regardless of where the individual blind pupils may be enrolled in those states.

There is no controversy among us on this principle. The American Association of Instructors of the Blind adopted a resolution at its Batavia convention last year pointing up the need for amendment of the law. A bill has been introduced into this session of Congress by Congressman John M. Robsion, Jr. of Kentucky (H.R. 3136), commonly known among us as the American Printing House bill. APH, as administrators of the law, is in accord, There are some slight differences among us as to whether the terminology of the bill is quite clear, but we are

generally assured by legislative counsel that if passed it will achieve the objective.

6. THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF A BILL IN CONGRESS WHICH WILL PROVIDE FOR A THOROUGH STUDY UNDER CONGRESSIONAL AUSPICES, OF ALL THE SERVICES FOR BLIND PERSONS AS THEY EXIST UNDER FEDERAL STATUTES AND AS THEY ARE IMPLEMENTED THROUGH COOPERATING STATE AGENCIES.

Three years ago the American Foundation for the Blind responded to the request of certain congressmen to assist in drafting a bill which would provide for a thorough study, under Congressional auspices, of the total picture of services for blind persons as they exist under the several federal statutes and as they are implemented through cooperating state agencies. This bill would have created a special, temporary, advisory committee to survey public work for the blind in the United States. For many reasons, the bill did not reach even the stage of committee discussion in Congress. Consequently, the study which it would have implemented still has not been made.

No agency, federal or state, national or local, private or public, expressed anything but support of the measure. The Foundation is convinced that such a study is still necessary and wise. The only change advocated in the form of the proposed bill itself is an increase in the amount of money which would be provided for the expenses of the survey committee from the $50,000.00 sum in the original bill to an estimated appropriation of $100,000.00.

As of this writing, we have assurance from Congressman Percy Priest of Tennessee and Congressman D. R. Matthews of Florida, that they will pursue the introduction of such a measure.

7. ENABLING LEGISLATION TO CREATE A FEDERAL BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR BLIND PERSONS WITH ITS COORDINATING AUTHORITY PLACED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE, AND WITH ITS MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY THAT OF REVIEWING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL FEDERAL SERVICES TO BLIND PERSONS AT STATE LEVEL PRIOR TO THE GRANTING OF FEDERAL AID.

Even without the benefit of a study such as that called for in item number 6, there are some of us who believe that the services which are available to blind persons through federal legislation are being seriously hampered in their administration by lack of coordination. It is not necessarily believed that all of the dozen federal programs which affect blindness and blind persons should be consolidated under a new federal office.

It is felt, however, that statutory provision should be made, either through an amendment to existing laws or through new legislation, for a Bureau of Services to the Blind with coordinating authority in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Such a bureau, headed by an appointee of high civil service rating with the title of Coordinator of Services to the Blind, would not be empowered to remove from all other department or offices the direct authority for and responsibility for certain service programs. In some instances it would be unwise to isolate the services for the blind persons from the broader program of an agency devoted to health, welfare, or rehabilitation.

However, such a bureau and its coordinator could be given significant influence through making it and him responsible for reviewing the manner in which all federal services to blind persons are to be implemented at state levels before granting of federal aid would be approved for the respective states. Such a bureau would be required by law to avail itself of the advice of a representative body of professional and lay leaders who would be chosen on the basis of their broad understanding of the field of work for the blind.

The Foundation freely admits that the foregoing principle is high controversial. It is not a new idea, and the principal reason why it has never progressed to a stage of organized effort toward its creation is because of differences of

opinion as to the extent or degree of the authority of such a bureau. The Foundation, therefore, is currently not actively seeking the establishment of such a plan, but firmly believes that it is an administrative feature of all federal services which should be given open-minded and continued study.

8. FINANCIAL AID FOR THE EDUCATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN.

Providing special education for all handicapped children in America is presenting a severe problem to almost all of the states, and especially to those states in which economic conditions make it impossible to maintain even regular schools on the basis of high standards. The Foundation realizes that the general and broad question of federal aid to education is controversial.

However, the Foundation believes that the education of blind children in any of the recognized systems under which it may or should exist, will not progress as rapidly as the needs of those children demand unless more financial aid is extended to the states in some form. The Foundation also believes that efforts on behalf of the education of young blind people should be coordinated with the efforts of other forces working in the interests of all exceptional children, since the problem of educating all is a severe one and the harvest to be reaped from a well nourished program of special education will be of immeasurable value to the entire national community.

The Foundation's role in this area at this time will be one of consultation with any accredited group with regard to the special problems of blind children rather than active initiation of an aid program.

9. RECOGNITION OF A TAXPAYER'S RIGHT TO CLAIM AN ADDITIONAL EXEMPTION ON INCOME TAX RETURNS FOR MAINTENANCE OF A BLIND DEPENDENT.

During the conferences which the Foundation has entered into, not only currently but for some time in the past, it became evident that the language of the

income tax law was inadvertently restrictive in the application of the principle that blindness merits an exemption in addition to the normal exemptions that a taxpayer may claim. The current exemption for blindness does not permit the taxpayer to claim the exemption for a blind dependent other than his spouse.

There is no controversial aspect to this question among us in this field, and so far as we know only ready acceptance of the idea of extension among members of Congress.

The AAWB instigated efforts some weeks ago to bring this problem to the attention of Congress. As a result, a bill which would achieve the objective was introduced by Congressman Wilbur Mills of Arkansas (H.R. 3605). So far as we know, there is no reason why it should not pass eventually.

A. F. B.

BULLETIN

No. 2 July 1955

The 84th Congress will soon complete its first session. Many bills have been introduced and some few enacted into law. None of the bills in which workers for the blind are especially interested have yet been acted upon by Congress. The purpose of this Bulletin is to give to the readers the major provisions of the bills in which workers for the blind are especially interested. It is suggested that all readers of this Bulletin contact the sponsor of each bill, registering their thoughts on the subject. It would be well to do this before Congress reconvenes in January. If a sponsor has a sizeable number of letters in support of his bill, it is much easier for him to secure action by the committee in control.

The bills dealing specifically with work for the blind are listed in the following numerical order:

> H. R. 3136 - A BILL to amend the Act to promote the education of the blind, approved March 3, 1879, as amended, so as to authorize wider distribution of books and other special instructional material for the blind, to increase the appropriations authorized for this purpose, and for other purposes.

This is a measure recommended by the American Printing House for the Blind. It was requested through a resolution passed by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind at its 1954 convention. The bill would, if enacted, make avail-

able to all blind students, regardless of the school they are attending, textbooks and equipment manufactured by the American Printing House for the Blind. Under present law, Congress provides funds to furnish textbooks and technical equipment through the Printing House to all students enrolled in residential schools and day classes in public schools, on a per capita basis. This bill would extend this service to the blind student enrolled in the regular public school system as well as schools for the blind and day school classes for the blind. The bill was introduced on January 26 by Congressman John M. Robsion Jr. of Kentucky.

H. R. 3605 - A BILL to grant an additional income tax exemption to a taxpayer supporting a dependent who is blind.

This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide that a taxpayer supporting a blind dependent could, when computing income tax, take the special exemption for blindness. The present law extends this privilege only to the blind taxpayer or to the sighted taxpayer and his blind spouse when filing a joint return. This bill was introduced on February 3 by Congressman Wilbur D. Mills of Arkansas.

H. R. 5658 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to increase the amount of income which an individual may earn while receiving aid to the blind thereunder, and for other purposes.

This bill, if enacted into law, will amend Title X of the Social Security Act. It will extend the provision of exempt earnings to 50% of all income earned by a recipient of aid to the blind in excess of $50 per month now specified. This bill further provides that a recipient of aid to the blind is carried on the rolls for a period of six months after he reduces his grant to zero by his increased earnings. If during this six month period the former recipient of aid to the blind should lose his job or his earning capacity is reduced below the amount received during the last month in which he received aid to the blind, he is automatically restored to the rolls without any further investigation. This protects the individual's security while at the same time giving him an incentive to develop his earning power to the

point where he eventually becomes self-supporting and is taken completely off aid to the blind rolls. This bill was introduced on April 19 by Congressman Thomas A. Jenkins of Ohio.

> H. R. 6368 - A BILL to amend Title II of the Social Security Act to provide that certain individuals who become blind shall be deemed to have reached retirement age.

This bill would make certain technical amendments to Title II of the Social Security Act to provide that if a person working in employment which is covered by Old Age and Survivors Insurance should become blind, he would start receiving benefits as though he had reached retirement age, provided that the individual had worked as much as four quarters in the covered occupation since the passage of the Social Security Act. This bill was introduced by Congressman Victor L. Anfuso of New York on May 19.

> H. R. 6500 - A BILL for the establishment of a temporary National Advisory Committee for the Blind.

This bill will be remembered by many readers of this Bulletin as the bill introduced first by Governor Boggs of Delaware, while he was serving as Congressman. It was later introduced by other members of Congress but never received consideration by the Education and Labor Committee. The bill would establish a nine man committee to make a study of work for the blind on a federal, state and local level for the purpose of recommending to Congress the necessary legislation to establish a long range program of services to the blind. The committee would be a representative group appointed by the President of the United States. The bill also provides for the necessary appropriation to make the study and sets a time limit of twenty-four months in which the study is to be made and the report filed with the President and Congress. Workers for the blind are convinced that this is a study which is long over-due in the field of work for the blind. The present bill was introduced on May 26 by Congressman D. R. (Billy) Matthews of Florida.

H. R. 6996 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to enable the States to provide more adequate financial assistance to needy individuals who are blind and to encourage and stimulate needy blind individuals to become self-supporting.

This bill is designed to amend Title X of the Social Security Act in several ways. First, it would increase the amount of earnings which are considered as exempt in determining need for aid to the blind from $50 per month to $1,000 a year. It would further exempt one-half of all income in excess of $1,000 per year. It would provide a $3,000 exemption for real and personal property held by a recipient of aid to the blind and would disregard relative responsibility in determining need for aid to the blind. It would change the formula on a federal-state grant-in-aid basis and increase the maximum amount in which the federal government will participate to $75 per month. This bill was introduced on June 23 by Congressman Cecil R. King of California and is supported by the National Federation of the Blind.

H. R. 7011 - A BILL to provide books and sound-reproduction records for certain physically incapacitated persons, and for other purposes.

This bill, if enacted into law, would grant to the quadruplegics and persons confined to respirators the privilege of using the library services (Talking Books especially) now provided the blind. It makes an attempt to increase the authorization for appropriations by $750,000; however, many individuals who have studied the bill are of the opinion that the wording is such that authorization would be reduced from the present $1,125,000 to $750,000, rather than to increase the original amount. This bill was introduced on June 27 by Congressman Earl Chudoff of Pennsylvania. It is our understanding that the bill is sponsored by a group of severely disabled individuals in Mr. Chudoff's home District.

S. 2119 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to increase the amount of income which an individual may earn while receiving aid to the blind thereunder, and for other purposes.

This is a companion bill to H. R. 5658 which has already been discussed in this Bulletin. The bill was introduced on June 1 by Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin.

With the exception of H. R. 3136, H. R. 6996 and H. R. 7011, all bills discussed in this Bulletin were introduced at the request of representatives of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind and are supported by the two organizations. H. R. 3136 has been endorsed by the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind, as well as by the American Printing House for the Blind and the American Association of Instructors of the Blind.

It is again urgently requested that all readers of this bulletin register their thoughts on each measure with the Congressman or Senator who introduced the measure and also with their own representative in Congress. Copies of your letters would be appreciated by the Washington representative of the American Foundation for the Blind, 15th and K Streets, N. W., Washington, D. C.

A. F. B.

BULLETIN

No. 2 July 1955

The 84th Congress will soon complete its first session. Many bills have been introduced and some few enacted into law. None of the bills in which workers for the blind are especially interested have yet been acted upon by Congress. The purpose of this Bulletin is to give to the readers the major provisions of the bills in which workers for the blind are especially interested. It is suggested that all readers of this Bulletin contact the sponsor of each bill, registering their thoughts on the subject. It would be well to do this before Congress reconvenes in January. If a sponsor has a sizeable number of letters in support of his bill, it is much easier for him to secure action by the committee in control.

The bills dealing specifically with work for the blind are listed in the following numerical order:

> H. R. 3136 - A BILL to amend the Act to promote the education of the blind, approved March 3, 1879, as amended, so as to authorize wider distribution of books and other special instructional material for the blind, to increase the appropriations authorized for this purpose, and for other purposes.

This is a measure recommended by the American Printing House for the Blind. It was requested through a resolution passed by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind at its 1954 convention. The bill would, if enacted, make avail-

able to all blind students, regardless of the school they are attending, textbooks and equipment manufactured by the American Printing House for the Blind. Under present law, Congress provides funds to furnish textbooks and technical equipment through the Printing House to all students enrolled in residential schools and day classes in public schools, on a per capita basis. This bill would extend this service to the blind student enrolled in the regular public school system as well as schools for the blind and day school classes for the blind. The bill was introduced on January 26 by Congressman John M. Robsion Jr. of Kentucky.

H. R. 3605 - A BILL to grant an additional income tax exemption to a taxpayer supporting a dependent who is blind.

This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide that a taxpayer supporting a blind dependent could, when computing income tax, take the special exemption for blindness. The present law extends this privilege only to the blind taxpayer or to the sighted taxpayer and his blind spouse when filing a joint return. This bill was introduced on February 3 by Congressman Wilbur D. Mills of Arkansas.

H. R. 5658 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to increase the amount of income which an individual may earn while receiving aid to the blind thereunder, and for other purposes.

This bill, if enacted into law, will amend Title X of the Social Security Act. It will extend the provision of exempt earnings to 50% of all income earned by a recipient of aid to the blind in excess of $50 per month now specified. This bill further provides that a recipient of aid to the blind is carried on the rolls for a period of six months after he reduces his grant to zero by his increased earnings. If during this six month period the former recipient of aid to the blind should lose his job or his earning capacity is reduced below the amount received during the last month in which he received aid to the blind, he is automatically restored to the rolls without any further investigation. This protects the individual's security while at the same time giving him an incentive to develop his earning power to the

point where he exentually becomes self-supporting and is taken completely off aid to the blind rolls. This bill was introduced on April 19 by Congressman Thomas A. Jenkins of Ohio.

> H. R. 6368 - A BILL to amend Title II of the Social Security Act to provide that certain individuals who become blind shall be deemed to have reached retirement age.

This bill would make certain technical amendments to Title II of the Social Security Act to provide that if a person working in employment which is covered by Old Age and Survivors Insurance should become blind, he would start receiving benefits as though he had reached retirement age, provided that the individual had worked as much as four quarters in the covered occupation since the passage of the Social Security Act. This bill was introduced by Congressman Victor L. Anfuso of New York on May 19.

> H. R. 6500 - A BILL for the establishment of a temporary National Advisory Committee for the Blind.

This bill will be remembered by many readers of this Bulletin as the bill introduced first by Governor Boggs of Delaware, while he was serving as Congressman. It was later introduced by other members of Congress but never received consideration by the Education and Labor Committee. The bill would establish a nine man committee to make a study of work for the blind on a federal, state and local level for the purpose of recommending to Congress the necessary legislation to establish a long range program of services to the blind. The committee would be a representative group appointed by the President of the United States. The bill also provides for the necessary appropriation to make the study and sets a time limit of twenty-four months in which the study is to be made and the report filed with the President and Congress. Workers for the blind are convinced that this is a study which is long over-due in the field of work for the blind. The present bill was introduced on May 26 by Congressman D. R. (Billy) Matthews of Florida.

H. R. 6996 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to enable the States to provide more adequate financial assistance to needy individuals who are blind and to encourage and stimulate needy blind individuals to become self-supporting.

This bill is designed to amend Title X of the Social Security Act in several ways. First, it would increase the amount of earnings which are considered as exempt in determining need for aid to the blind from $50 per month to $1,000 a year. It would further exempt one-half of all income in excess of $1,000 per year. It would provide a $3,000 exemption for real and personal property held by a recipient of aid to the blind and would disregard relative responsibility in determining need for aid to the blind. It would change the formula on a federal-state grant-in-aid basis and increase the maximum amount in which the federal government will participate to $75 per month. This bill was introduced on June 23 by Congressman Cecil R. King of California and is supported by the National Federation of the Blind.

H. R. 7011 - A BILL to provide books and sound-reproduction records for certain physically incapacitated persons, and for other purposes.

This bill, if enacted into law, would grant to the quadruplegics and persons confined to respirators the privilege of using the library services (Talking Books especially) now provided the blind. It makes an attempt to increase the authorization for appropriations by $750,000; however, many individuals who have studied the bill are of the opinion that the wording is such that authorization would be reduced from the present $1,125,000 to $750,000, rather than to increase the original amount. This bill was introduced on June 27 by Congressman Earl Chudoff of Pennsylvania. It is our understanding that the bill is sponsored by a group of severely disabled individuals in Mr. Chudoff's home District.

S. 2119 - A BILL to amend Title X of the Social Security Act to increase the amount of income which an individual may earn while receiving aid to the blind thereunder, and for other purposes.

This is a companion bill to H. R. 5658 which has already been discussed in this Bulletin. The bill was introduced on June 1 by Senator Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin.

With the exception of H. R. 3136, H. R. 6996 and H. R. 7011, all bills discussed in this Bulletin were introduced at the request of representatives of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind and are supported by the two organizations. H. R. 3136 has been endorsed by the American Association of Workers for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind, as well as by the American Printing House for the Blind and the American Association of Instructors of the Blind.

It is again urgently requested that all readers of this bulletin register their thoughts on each measure with the Congressman or Senator who introduced the measure and also with their own representative in Congress. Copies of your letters would be appreciated by the Washington representative of the American Foundation for the Blind, 15th and K Streets, N. W., Washington, D. C.

A. F. B.

BULLETIN

No. 3 January 1956

ATTENTION ALL WORKERS WITH AND FRIENDS OF THE BLIND

Your united efforts can bring to the floor of the United States Congress a very important piece of legislation affecting work for the blind. H.R. 6500 is now held by the Committee on Education & Labor in the House of Representatives. A hearing has been requested on this measure and a letter to the Chairman of this committee, with a copy to your own congressman and to the Washington representative of the American Foundation for the Blind, will certainly be helpful in bringing this important measure to a vote.

A brief analysis follows:

H. R. 6500, introduced by Congressman D. R. (Billy) Mattews of Florida, on May 26, 1955.

TITLE

A BILL for the establishment of a temporary National Advisory Committee for the blind.

Section 1. Provides for the establishment of a temporary committee to study all phases of work for the blind on a Federal, State and local level, with a view to making recommendations to Congress and the President of the

United States on work for the blind in the future.

Section 2. Outlines the method to be followed in selecting the nine members of the committee.

Section 3. Provides for the organization of the committee, directing that said committee shall elect a chairman from its membership.

Section 4. Sets forth what shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. Sets forth the compensation of the committee on per diem plus subsistence basis.

Section 6. Provides for the employment of necessary staff to carry out the provisions of the bill.

Section 7. States the powers of the committee. Namely: hold hearings, examine records, secure statistics and other information, prepare reports and perform any other functions necessary as required by the bill.

Section 8. Provides the authority for the necessary appropriation.

Section 9. Provides for the termination of the committee.

H.R. 6500 does not establish any specific services to the blind, rather it provides the means through which a comprehensive study can be made by a competent group of individuals with a view to making recommendations to Congress, after the overall picture is clear. No one can predict what the committee will find or what recommendations for future programs will be contained in its report.

It is strongly urged that you write at once to Honorable Graham A. Barden, Chairman, Committee on Education & Labor, House of Representatives, Washington 25, D. C., with a copy to your own Congressman and the Washington representative of the American Foundation for the Blind, 442 Investment Building, 1511 K Street, N.W., Washington 5, D. C., setting forth your own opinions on this particular piece of legislation, and urging Mr. Barden to call a Committee hearing at a very early date.

A. F. B.

BULLETIN

No. 4 February 1956

STATUS OF PENDING FEDERAL LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE BLIND

Following a recent meeting of the Legislative Committee of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and representatives of the American Foundation for the Blind, steps were agreed upon designed to stimulate Congressional action with respect to certain bills introduced for the purpose of advancing work for the blind and for providing more liberal programs of assistance and basic security. The following resumé of the current situation may serve to inform all readers interested in these measures and willing to lend their own support in the effort to bring them to fruition through favorable Congressional action. Four measures in particular are the subject of current concern.

H.R. 6500 - the Matthews Bill, calling for the appointment of a Temporary National Advisory Committee to study all work for the blind and submit recommendations which may lead to substantial improvements. The bill is now in the House Committee on Education and Labor. No particular opposition to the bill is know to exist but until hearings of the Committee are held it will be impossible to move the bill to the House floor. For that reason, members of the AAWB Legislative

Committee and of the AFB have recently called upon members of the House Committee to ask that they urge the Chairman of the Committee (Mr. Barden of North Carolina) to call a hearing. Representatives of the AAWB and of the AFB have also met with representatives of the Legislative Division of the Bureau of the Budget to urge that they indicate their approval of the bill, since the opposition of the Bureau of the Budget (indicated in connection with previous similar proposals introduced in the previous Congresses) will effectively serve to block action on the bill. There is reason to hope that the bill now in committee may have a better than even chance of early consideration.

H.R. 7225 - the Cooper Bill to amend the Social Security Act.

At the invitation of the Senate Finance Committee, Mr. George A. Keane, Assistant Director of the Industrial Home for the Blind, and Vice-Chariman of the Legislative Committee of the AAWB, which organization he represented, and Mr. Helen C. Walker, Legislative Analyst of the AFB, which he represented, spoke before the Senate Finance Committee, on Thursday, February 2. The meeting (attended by Senator Byrd, Chairman, Senator George, Senator Long, Senator Kerr, and Senator Carlson) had been called in connection with Senate Hearings on H.R. 7225, the House-enacted bill which amends the Social Security Act, to extend coverage to more workers, to provide for the payment of disability benefits to certain disabled workers, and for other pupposes. The Senate Finance Committee had been informed that representatives of the blind and of organizations working with the blind were not satisfied with the disability provisions of the bill which passed the House, and that they wished to propose amendments which would serve to make disability provisions for the blind more liberal, more realistic and more meaningful.

Both Mr. Keane and Mr. Walker, in their prepared statements, pointed out certain weaknesses now contained in the House bill, and suggested measures designed to improve those provisions of the bill which will affect the blind. During the hearing

each was able to offer extemporaneous comment in support of his statement, and of the provisions desired by way of amendments to the bill. Both were in substantial agreement as to what is desired, and both were pleased to note that substantially the same measures for improvement in the bill were advocated by Mr. A.L. Archibald, Executive Director of the National Federation of the Blind, which he represented and in whose behalf he also testified.

Briefly, the amendments proposed include the following provisions:

1. Inclusion in the bill of a definition of blindness, preferably the commonly accepted definition of 20/200 etc. as relating to Aid to the Blind Grants under Title X of the Social Security Act, and to most other programs for the blind, rather than the more restrictive definition of 5/200 as provided in the 1954 Social Security Act amendments, as they relate to the disability freeze provisions governing the p reservation of O.A.S.I. benefit rights.

2. A provision that certification of blindness (as it may be defined in the bill) shall be considered presumptive evidence of permanent disability, so that the blind will not be tied to the existing provision that "disability" means inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity. Under the existing d efinition of disability the blind would have to prove that they are unemployable. It is believed that the blind should not have to prove medically that their disability renders them unemployable (since to do so would discourage rehabilitation) and that blindness itself should be sufficient reason to regard them as unemployable and thus entitled to disability benefit payments.

3. A provision that, regardless of the age at which blindness occurs to an employee working in a covered occupation and regardless of his period of coverage, the worker losing his sight shall from the onset of blindness qualify immediately for disability payments. Presently, the House bill requires that payments shall not begin until the age of 50, and that to be eligible there shall be 20 quarters

of coverage under the Act. It is argued by spokesmen for the blind that it is not age but blidness which renders the worker disabled, and that his need for disability benefits is no less crucial below the age of 50 than after that age.

4. A provision that disability payments for the blind shall be set at the existing maximum O.A.S.I. payment to retired workers (currently $108.50 monthly), instead of the House provision that such payments shall be at the level to which the worker would be entitled as O.A.S.I, benefits, should he have retired at age 65 instead of being forced out of employment because of blindness. It was pointed out that under customary insurance programs, payments are made (for death or for any other risk for which insurance is provided) at the time of and from the moment of the loss insured against) and that one premium payment will suffice to validate a death claim even if the insured dies the next day. It was also pointed out that a young worker entering covered employment and soon thereafter losing his sight might have had no time to build an O.A.S.I. equity in the program and would in such an event possibly never have an opportunity to do so, in which case under the present provisions he would not be entitled to more than the minimum O.A.S.I. payment ($30 monthly). To protect the blind, it is felt that they should be given a much more generous benefit payment, especially since for most, the likelihood of regaining substantial gainful employment is very doubtful.

5. A provision that benefits to the blind paid under the bill shall not be reduced, or, if they are, at least not until the individual receiving benefit payments has from his own efforts to rehabilitate himself earned in any one year no less than $1,200, this being the sum which workers receiving O.A.S.I. retirement benefits are permitted to earn before any deductions are made from their monthly O.A.S.I. checks.

H.R. 5658 and S. 2119.

During the oral statements, and questions from certain senators, reference was

was made to Title X of the Social Security Act, and this gave our spokesman opportunity to mention H.R. 5658 - the Jenkins Bill, and S.2119 - the Wiley Bill (companion bills introduced in Congress at the request of the AAWB) providing for an exemption of 50% of each dollar earned monthly in addition to the currently exempted first $50 of earned monthly income, in computing the resources of applicants for Aid to the Needy Blind under Title X. They were also able to suggest that the present federal matching ceiling of $55 for Aid to the Blind grants to the states be raised to $75, and some favorable reaction was noted.

H.R. 3605 - the Mills Bill, to extend the income tax exemption of $600 now allowed to a blind taxpayer or for the blind spouse of a taxpayer, in order that the taxpayer may claim a $600 exemption for any blind dependent whom he supports. This bill would seem unlikely to be considered until or unless Congress considers a general tax cut. If it is not considered in this session of Congress it will be introduced again next year.

To summarize:

The blind and workers for the blind are now asking for amendments in H.R. 7225 to provide:

1. A definition of blindness, p referably 20/200 visual acuity with correction or a field restricted to no more than 20 degrees.
2. That blindness as above defined shall be presumptive evidence of permanent disability.
3. That there be no age restriction or minimum period of coverage applied in the case of the covered worker losing his sight.
4. That disability payments to the blind shall be no less than the existing maximum O.A.S.I. retirement benefit payments (currently $108.50 monthly).
5. That disability benefit payments to the blind shall not be reduced because of return to employment, or if reduced, not until the blind individual receiving benefits shall have earned in the year more than $1,200, as is cur-

rently permitted under present O.A.S.I, retirement benefit provisions.

6. That in addition to the first $50 per month of earned income now allowed, one-half of any additional earned income shall be disregarded in determining the need of an applicant for Aid to the Blind.

7. That the current federal maximum of $55 monthly shall be raised to $75 monthly in connection with federal grants to the states for Aid to the Needy Blind.

A CALL TO ACTION!

The AAWB and the AFB believe that these are minimum reasonable proposals and that the blind of the nation and those serving them will support these proposals whole-heartedly. Both organizations urge that all who agree will write immediately to members of the Senate Finance Committee, urging favorable consideration of these proposals. Letters should be sent to any or all of the following senators who are members of the Senate Finance Committee, and addressed to them at the Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D.C.

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Harry F. Byrd, (D) Chairman

Democrats	Republicans
Harry Flood Byrd, of Virginia	Eugene D. Millikin of Colorado
Walter F. George of Georgia	Edward Martin of Pennsylvania
Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma	John J. Williams of Delaware
J. Allen Frear, Jr. of Delaware	Ralph E. Flanders of Vermont
Russell B. Long of Louisiana	George W. Malone of Nevada
George A. Smathers of Florida	Frank Carlson of Kansas
Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas	Wallace F. Bennett of Utah
Alben W. Barkley of Kentucky	

A. F. B. BULLETIN

No. 5 September 1956

FEDERAL LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE BLIND

The activities of the 84th Congress can now be recorded as legislative history. Some bills of interest to blind persons were passed. Other bills which would have affected work for the blind, had they become laws, were introduced but finally forgotten in the committees to which they were referred.

H. R. 6500, a bill of special importance to all workers for the blind was introduced by Congressman Matthews of Florida. It proposed the establishment of a temporary National Advisory Committee for the Blind "to investigate and study the entire field of existing federal, state, and local activities relating to the granting of services to the blind, including the history and development of such activity." This bill had the support of many interested groups in work for the blind. However, as the majority of bills go, this too died in the Committee on Education and Labor. Mr. Matthews states that he intends to re-introduce the bill immediately after the 85th Congress convenes.

Only one bill was enacted into law which was specifically designed to expand benefits for the blind alone. This measure, usually referred to as the American Printing House for the Blind bill, was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Robsion of Kentucky (H.R. 3136) and in the Senate by the late Senator Barkley (S. 3259). It was signed by the President on August 2, 1956 and is now Public Law 922. The purpose of P. L. 922 is stated as follows: "To amend the Act to promote the education of the blind, approved March 3, 1879, as amended, so as to authorize wider distribution of books and other special instructional material for the blind, to increase the appropriations authorized for this purpose, and for other purposes."

This new Act includes the provision that the Printing House is legally empowered to make available books, tangible apparatus and technical equipment on a per capita basis to all blind children either in residential schools or in public schools. Heretofore public school classes have received such materials as a result of an opinion handed down on January 30, 1912, by the Department of the Treasury (under which the Act was then administered) stating that these classes were entitled to share in the free distribution of materials under the Act. The authorization for appropriations for this purpose is increased to $400,000. This is an increase of $150,000 over the formerly authorized amount.

Public Law 880 (amendments to the Social Security Act) will benefit the blind along with other severely disabled. The Act was amended in many ways, but for the purpose of this bulletin we shall only mention those parts that are of interest to blind persons.

1. A new formula is established for federal-state matching in the public assistance programs. In Aid to the Blind the maximum in which the federal government will participate is increased from $55 to $60 per month. Within this maximum the federal government will pay four fifths of the first $30 and one half of the next $30. This does not mean that every blind recipient of an AB grant will automatically get a $5 increase. Rather, it means that if state funds are available and the individual determination of need is shown to be $5 more, the state can raise the grant that amount or any portion of that amount.

2. A severely disabled individual (this includes the blind) may, under certain conditions, draw Social Security benefits beginning at age 50 or any time thereafter if the individual can prove that his earning power has been reduced due to his disability and if he meets other requirements set forth in the law, such as being fully insured, currently insured, and having 20 quarters of coverage in the last 40 quarters. Blindness is not a presumptive disability under this provision, but must be proven on an individual basis in the same manner as other disabilities. The provision is very technical and it is suggested that any blind person who believes that he is eligible should contact his local Social Security representative where he will be given the necessary application forms. The benefits are not paid automatically, but depend on individual determination for each application.

3. Funds are provided for medical services to recipients of public assistance under a formula by which the federal government matches a certain amount of state funds.

Public Law 937 was passed during the last days of the 84th Congress. This Act merely extends the time under which expansion grants can be made for rehabilitation projects under Section 4(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1954.

Public Law 825 is interesting to our field only in that it extends to the severely disabled the privilege of taking a guide on common carriers with the payment of only one fare, a privilege that for many years has been enjoyed by blind individuals. This is another incident when legislation for the blind has been a forerunner in providing benefits to other disabled groups.

Public Law 652, signed by the President on July 3 is another law that should be of interest to our field. This law authorizes the Public Health Service to conduct a continuing national survey, and special studies, of sickness and disability in the United States. Plans are now under way to derive statistical estimates of the extent of the major diseases, injuries and impairments. The program will consist of 1) a continuing sampling of the population by household interviews to obtain data on diseases and injuries, the resultant disabilities and the amount and type of medical and related services received; and 2) a series of special studies to collect more detailed information on certain conditions. The purpose of the program is to provide current and comprehensive statistical information on the magnitude of the health problem in this country and to permit a more accurate appraisal of health needs, manpower, facilities and resources.

Public Law 937 was passed during the last days of the 84th Congress. This Act merely extends the time under which expansion grants can be made for rehabilitation projects under Section 4(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1954.

Public Law 825 is interesting to our field only in that it extends to the severely disabled the privilege of taking a guide on commercial airline with the payment of only one fare, a privilege that for many years has been enjoyed by blind individuals. This is another instance when legislation for the blind has been a forerunner in providing benefits to other disabled groups.

Public Law 652, signed by the President on July 3 is another law that should be of interest to our field. This law authorizes the Public Health Service to conduct a continuing national survey, with special studies, of sickness and disability in the United States. Plans are now under way to derive statistical estimates of the extent of the major diseases, injuries and impairments. The program will consist of 1) a continuing sampling of the population by household interviews to obtain data on illnesses and injuries, the resultant disabilities and the amount and type of medical and related services received; and 2) a series of special studies to collect more detailed information on certain conditions. The purpose of the program is to provide current and comprehensive statistical information on the magnitude of the health problem in this country and to permit a more adequate appraisal of health needs, manpower, facilities and resources.

HV1571
A
AFB BULLETIN

1955-1956, 1-5

C.1

Date Due

USE ACCO PAPER FASTENERS FOR BINDING
ACCOPRESS BINDER
No. BFS 2507
MADE BY
ACCO PRODUCTS INCORPORATED
OGDENSBURG, N.Y., U.S.A.